

Quite recently this same journal has, we understand, sent a circular to most if not all physicians in the country, in which a certain patronizing esteem or sympathetic regard for the Medical Society of the State of California is expressed. We are almost helpless to resent such an insult and can only protest that as humble "toilers in the vineyard" with nothing but the virtue of simple honesty of purpose and endeavor to support us in the consciousness of striving for the right, we cannot, as we otherwise might, appreciate the patronizingly sympathetic expression of friendship on the part of the nostrum's advocate—the publisher of the *New York Medical Journal*.

The American Surgical Association.

[A Critical Review Written for the JOURNAL.]

The meeting of the American Surgical Association in San Francisco was an event of more than ordinary interest to the medical profession of this state. This Association was founded in 1881 by the elder Gross and has an active membership limited to 125, composed of a goodly majority of the most distinguished surgeons of this country. There is also a limited number of honorary members chosen from the European surgeons of world-wide fame. Of this group of men there were nearly 30 who gathered in San Francisco for this meeting. The scientific discussions were open to the profession and were attended by many from different parts of the state. While the acoustic properties of the hall in which the meetings were held were not the best, the great majority of the speakers could be heard.

The address of the President, Dr. George Ben Johnston of Richmond, Va., was an interesting account of the life of Mettauer of Virginia, whose work as a surgeon in the early part of the 19th century was of much importance. Dr. Johnston is a typical Southern gentleman and presided with much grace and dignity.

The symposium on the surgery of lesions of the spinal cord was not of very general interest, as but few have had the opportunity to do this special work, but the papers were of much value. Particularly of moment was the report of Dr. J. Collins Warren of Boston, of three cases of laminectomy for neoplasms of the cord with good results. Dr. Warren is a finished speaker and his wide experience entitles him to take an authoritative position on many matters of surgery.

None of the papers read commanded more attention than did that of Dr. Wm. J. Mayo of Rochester, Minn., entitled "A Comparison of Methods of Performing Gastro-enterostomy." The work of the two Mayo brothers has been of such a high character that they have rapidly acquired international reputations and consequently all the visitors were eager to hear one of them. Dr. Wm. Mayo is a clean-cut talker, of good presence, and carries conviction with every word. Dr. Maurice H. Richardson of Boston was one of the shining lights, as he is in any gathering, and his history of an unusual case of intussusception gave but an inkling of his charming class-room manner which has inspired so many students.

To mention the name of Dr. Chas. A. Powers of Denver is to bring to the minds of those who are acquainted with him his exceedingly pleasant personality. His papers are always of interest and evidence painstaking work of the highest character. The presence of Drs. Robert T. Weir of New York and A. J. Ochsner of Chicago added much to the interest of the occasion. The former is a fluent speaker and though somewhat advanced in years is still young in

mind. Dr. Ochsner is a vigorous though not very fluent talker and his paper on constriction of the duodenum opened up many new points for discussion. He has the ability to summarize well, both personal experiences and knowledge gained from the literature.

One of the best papers of the session was read by Dr. Roswell Park of Buffalo. It was a masterly exposition of the status lymphaticus and was delivered in his easy, forceful manner.

California was represented by Drs. Thomas W. Huntington and Emmet Rixford, who both presented papers. The state was further honored by the election to membership of Dr. Harry M. Sherman of San Francisco, who well merits this added dignity.

Nearly all the papers were well discussed and about the only criticism which might be made was that they were too long to be read in the allotted time of fifteen minutes, and, with but a couple of exceptions, the authors had not prepared abstracts. As a consequence the first parts of the papers were read in full while the latter parts were hurriedly abstracted or portions entirely omitted.

That the influence of this meeting on the surgeons of this community, especially the younger ones, was markedly for good, seems to be beyond question, and we trust that other such scientific bodies will favor us with their presence.

AMERICAN SURGICAL ASSOCIATION MEETING.

The sessions of the Association held in San Francisco, July 5, 6, 7, were well attended, considering the distance which most of the members had to travel, and were both valuable and instructive. Quite a number of California surgeons took advantage of the general invitation to attend the scientific sessions. Where all of the material presented is so good, it is somewhat difficult to select certain papers of particular interest or value, but the contributions of Roswell Park, Wm. Mayo and Thos. W. Huntington seemed to the careful observer to demand considerably more than passing interest. The relation of the physiological and pathological secretions of certain of the ductless glands to general surgery, so exceedingly well recounted by Park, and again accentuated by Huntington, indicate a direction which the surgical study of the future must take.

The following report of the meeting will doubtless seem somewhat fragmentary, but it must be remembered that in most cases the authors read abstracts of their papers and that nothing short of a verbatim report would be much more satisfactory.

Wednesday Morning Session.

The meeting was called to order by the Vice-president, Emmet Rixford, who introduced the President, George Benjamin Johnston, of Richmond, who read the annual presidential address. His essay dealt with the history of surgery in this country and was not only very carefully and interestingly prepared, but was also well delivered. It was mainly devoted to a sketch of the life of Mettauer. In 1840 he reported the first operation, which was performed in 1838, for the cure of vesico-vaginal fistula. Special instruments had been made by him, and lead wire was used for suture material. After citing numerous instances of marked advances, the paper was closed. Dr. Johnston took the chair and "End Results in Surgery of the Kidney" was read by A. Vander Veer, Albany, N. Y. He reported some very interesting cases including 24 nephrotomies, 9 nephrotomies followed by nephrectomies, 8 malignant growths, 2 decapsulations for nephritis, 6 of renal colic, apparently with stone, but stone found in one only, and 6 traumatismes. Operative procedures upon the kidney in the main promise well. In discussion Dr. Mayo asked if nephrotomy in tuberculosis has been followed by good